(b) whether it is also a fact that the agency responsible for construction is deliberately showing laxity in it due to the fact that departmental officers are not prompt in site inspection and checking in order to maintain the quality and standard of the constructions of the said four laning project; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) No, Sir. The quality control of four laning works of NH-57 are monitored by Supervision Consultant appointed through International Competitive Bidding by NHAI. Quality tests are regularly carried out at field laboratories by Supervision Consultants. In order to carefully monitor all projects of NH-57, NHAI has set up Project Implementation Units (PIUs) at suitable locations along the stretch. Senior officers regularly visit project sites for monitoring of projects.

(c) Does not arise.

First commercial space launch by India

4705. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether India made its first commercial space launch recently when its PSLV-C8 carried an Italian Satellite successfully and placed it in orbit 550 km. above the Earth from Sriharikota;

(b) the amount which ISRO charged from the Italian Space Agency for launching the Italian Satellite indicating the space area that AGILE would study; and

(c) the advantages that would accrue to India as a whole by going into space business and ISRO's joining a commercial launchers' club, indicating the names of other member countries of this $2 Billion Market club?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The total value of the launching contract was 7.38 million Euros. The commercial contract was made between Antrix Corporation, which is the commercial arm of Department of Space and a European company for launching the Italian satellite, AGILE. This satellite is equipped with scientific instruments capable of imaging distant celestial objects in x-ray and gamma ray regions of electromagnetic spectrum.

(c) The successful launch has demonstrated the versatility and reliability of PSLV launches for different orbits and boosts the confidence of international customers for commercial launches on ISRO's launch vehicles in the market competed by USA, Russia, China, Ukraine and other European launch service providers.

Weather prediction by TOPS

4706. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) how exactly is the Terrestrial Observation and Prediction System (TOPS) works for predicting the weather conditions accurately;

(b) the cost benefit ratio of TOPS;

(c) how TOPS helps Andhra Pradesh since irrigation in Andhra Pradesh is a major problem;

(d) whether Remote Sensing Application Centre in Andhra Pradesh has sought or approached National Remote Sensing Agency (NRSA) for help or assistance in this regard; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) and (b) The Terrestrial Observation and Prediction System (TOPS) is a global programme to utilize terrestrial and atmospheric data and weather models to predict weather events. Accurate prediction of severe weather events can help in disaster management and save lives and property. Quantitative cost benefit analysis has not been made.